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ABSTRACT

This booklet (one of a series of 10 booklets in a reading project to benefit Kosair Children's Hospital in Louisville, Kentucky) contains 10 stories especially written for seventh graders by educators. The stories are about: young people with chronic conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy; accidents and accident prevention; children's reactions to various hospital experiences as well as to serious illnesses and deaths; attitudes toward personal differences caused by physical disabilities, birth defects, etc.; and similar topics. Students read the stories in the booklet and answer comprehension questions, and pledges are made by parents and friends for each question answered. The stories or story topics may be used in the classroom for instructional purposes and are intended to help integrate the language arts, social studies, health, and creative arts. (SR)

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What is it?

It is an educational project designed to benefit KOSAIR Children's Hospital. Students at each grade level (K-8) read ten stories and answer comprehension questions. Pledges are made by parents and friends for each question answered.

What are these stories about?

The stories are about: diseases; accidents; accident prevention; children's reactions to hospital stays; dealing with personal differences; etc. For older children, the topics of alcohol and drug abuse are also included. Many of these stories highlight personal triumphs.

Who reads these stories?

Any child whose teacher and parent(s) support the project.

Can children receive help with reading and answering questions?

Yes. Parents are encouraged to help their child (regardless of reading ability) read and answer the questions.

How much instructional time will this take?

Very little. Teachers simply take a child's word for his participation and record the money returned. Upon completion of the program, the teacher completes a brief checklist for any prizes earned.

BENEFITS

Reading/Writing Experience

These stories are interesting and educationally sound at each grade level. The questions following each selection are based on a new questioning strategy. Children will be actively engaged in the reading/writing process.

Philanthropy

Children learn to be helping members of society as they raise money for less fortunate children.

Parental Involvement/Interaction

Children will have the opportunity to discuss with parents ideas and concerns that may never have been brought out without the questions following these stories.

Integration of Subjects

Teachers may use stories or story topics in the classroom for instructional purposes. Teachers will be provided with motivational and educational strategies to accompany these stories. These ideas help integrate the language arts, social studies, health, and creative arts. Many are based on whole language ideas, and higher level thinking skills are encouraged.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Rewards

All children will receive an achievement certificate signifying their participation in the program. Children who collect $10 or more in pledges will receive prizes for their accomplishments. Best of all, children will gain a sense of pride as they help other children.

For more information, you may write of call: Susan Ramp Ridout, Ph.D.
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Kosair Children's Hospital's

READATHON

KIDS HELPING KIDS

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STORIES WRITTEN BY EDUCATORS FROM INDIANA AND KENTUCKY

A LETTER TO THE PARENT
ABOUT THIS BOOK AND YOUR CHILD

This booklet contains stories especially written for children of your child's age. They have all been written by educators. Many of them tell of the fears and feelings these educators had when they were children. Some of them are written through the eyes of a parent.

The stories deal with topics which are sometimes difficult for us to think or talk about. Yet, these very topics are the ones which our children most desperately need to have an adult share with them. Some of the stories may make you and your child cry or feel sad. Others will lift your spirits in memorable ways. Hopefully, one or two will cause you to say, "I had those same feelings."

It is our sincere hope you will use these stories as starters for a special time of sharing with your child.

No one knows your child better than you do. Therefore, we encourage you to preview the stories before your child reads them or you read them to your child. Some stories may be best read with your child. It is, of course, your right and responsibility to exclude any story which you may feel is beyond your child's present level of maturity.

At the end of each story are questions to be answered. At your discretion, your child may either write or discuss the answers with a responsible adult. Questions which are well suited for discussion are marked with asterisks (*). Questions answered in either form may be counted toward your child's fund raising efforts for the children of Kosair.

These booklets are in their first printing. If you have suggestions or comments which would improve their effectiveness in helping future readers, please call or write to:

Susan J. Gibbs
Director of Annual Giving and Special Events
Children's Hospital Foundation
601 S. Floyd Street
Louisville, KY 40202
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Looking "Different"

Phyllis Hoffmeister
New Washington Elementary

Do you like to look "different"? I look "different" from most girls, and sometimes I don't like it. You see, I am very tall. I was six feet and three inches tall--the last time I measured. That is probably as tall or taller than your dad! And when my hair is fluffed up and I put on high heels--well, I "grow" a few more inches! I am taller than any girl in our whole high school and most of the guys, too.

I get stared at a lot. Sometimes it makes me sad. People often look at my feet. I think they wonder if I am wearing spike heels or walking on stilts. I may look like I'm wearing mini-skirts or crop pants because stores don't make girl's clothes long enough for me.

One place that it is nice to be tall is in the gym. It seems that if you are tall, you are expected to be an athlete. I think that is why I became one. Anyhow, when I play basketball, I get more cheers than stares. And on the volleyball court, my height is respected by my opponents. With my tall teammates, I don't look quite so "different."

I can't change my height. Only Walt Disney knows how to shrink kids. And I wouldn't want to shrink quite that much! Because I will always be very tall, I will have to get used to the stares and comments like, "How's the weather up there?" and, "Gosh, you're tall!" But I will also appreciate people who give me nice comments. I really like it when someone says, "Your hair looks pretty today," or "You have such a nice smile."

I have become very sensitive to others who also look "different"--different sizes, different shapes, different colors. I try not to stare but rather smile. If I talk with them, I try to compliment them in some nice way. We may look "different" on the outside, but on the inside we are pretty much the same. We all have feelings. We all like to know someone cares.

I guess the world would be a bit boring and a lot confusing if none of us looked "different." Looking "different" can be good. It can make you very special.

Questions

1. Why is the gym a good place to be tall?

2. What are some other problems a very tall girl might have?

3. What are some ways people look and are different?

* 4. What are some nice things you might say to people who look different?

* 5. How might this tall girl better understand handicapped children? Is being tall a handicap? Explain.

6. Generally, it seems that boys prefer to be tall while girls would rather not be extra tall. Why?

7. When is it good to look different?

* 8. How can you help a person who looks different?

* 9. How do you look different from your friends or others in your family?

* 10. What would it be like if no one in the world looked different?

*Recommended for discussion

My Buddy Gina

Marcia Lamb
North Harrison Elementary

Gina was a bright, brown eyed, brown haired fifteen-year-old. She was sweet and sensitive. She was spunky and confident. She was fun to be around. She was my first cousin.

I loved to visit Gina at her home, and she loved to visit me on the farm. She was a city girl. I was a country girl. Many times we wished our roles in life were reversed. She loved horses, and if she had lived on my farm, the fields would have been filled with them. If I had lived in the city, I could have ridden my bike anywhere I wanted--to the mall, to McDonald's, to the park, or even to school. Many times I was lonely on the farm since I was an only child.

Gina was the "sister" I always wanted. We looked alike, and we felt alike about things. We both loved horses. We even broke our arms at the same time in different accidents. We were best buddies.

One day Gina went for a bike ride that would change the rest of her life. She had ridden down the same street hundreds of times, and this wasn't her first bike wreck. She flew over the handle bars bruising her stomach and side badly. When she was able to get up and go home, her mother and father took her to the emergency room at the local hospital. The doctor told her that they would take x-rays, which is the normal thing to do in any accident. But those x-rays showed something that none of the doctors had expected to see. There was a growth in Gina's stomach that should not have been there. It looked like it had been there for a long time and was not caused by the bike wreck.

Gina's parents took her to Children's Hospital. Doctors did more tests and found that Gina had a malignancy. This is a doctor's way of saying cancer. Since they had not discovered it early, the doctors wanted to do surgery right away. After surgery the news was not good. The doctors did not think Gina would live long.

Of course she was frightened. And at times she would cry. But when I visited her in the hospital, she wanted to talk about me, about what I was doing. She never wanted to talk about her illness. I wanted her to be happy, so I never mentioned it either.

Gina got to come home from the hospital for awhile. But within six months, she was back in the hospital and would never return home again. The last time I saw her was a night I will never forget. I can close my eyes and still see it like a picture. I went to see Gina after not visiting her for about two weeks. When I walked into the room, the sight of her scared me! Her body was tense with pain. I don't know if she knew I was there because I ran from the room. Her mother tried to stop me and asked me to come to her bedside, but I wouldn't go.

The next day Gina died. I never got the chance to say goodbye. I never told her how much I would miss her or that I loved her. I still feel like I was such a chicken. At that time I was thinking of myself and my fear and not of Gina. I acted in a very selfish way. Even though it would have been hard for me to go to her bedside and hold her hand, it was a last gift to my buddy that I should have been able to give. She gave me so much while she was with me. I know she would have been able to have given me that gift if our lives had been reversed.

Questions

1. What kind of person was Gina?
2. What kind of disease did Gina have?
3. How was Gina different from Marcia?
4. How were Marcia and Gina alike?
5. What did they want to reverse about their lives?
6. Why did Gina feel frightened after surgery?
* 7. Why did Gina always want to talk about Marcia and not herself?
8. What might have happened if Gina had never gone on that bike ride?
* 9. What might have happened if Marcia had gone to her bedside the night of her last visit?
* 10. How do you feel about Marcia now that you have read this story?

* Recommended for discussion

Pookie's Problem

Wanda Fuhry
Slate Run Elementary

Everyone at school thought he was pretty tough, and HE did, too. He was taller than most of the kids. He wore his hair in a buzz with weird notches here and there, and he wore an earring in his left ear. He was a sloppy dresser and even stuck safety pins all over his jacket. He figured that safety pins made people think of pain, and pain made them think of being tough. He wasn't very smart, and he wasn't great at sports or art or anything, really, so he figured that his tough-guy image would make everybody remember the name of Pookie Sanlwart.

He kind of liked his nickname, Pookie, except when his four-year old sister used it. How embarrassing to be outside with the guys and hear Amy call, "POO-TEE! Time to tum home!" Little sisters, he thought, should be kept penned up somewhere out of sight.

Life was going pretty well for Pookie, all things being considered. He had finally accepted the fact that going to school and finishing 5th grade was a law and not just his parent's idea. Girls were starting to notice him. Guys thought it was cool to hang around with him. Teachers were better able to tolerate him. But he had been feeling awfully tired lately, and he noticed that his lower back was hurting. He figured that Amy must have hurt him the last time he gave her a "horsey-back" ride. He didn't complain to anyone because a tough guy doesn't go around crying about such minor things. He remembered seeing Rambo sew up his own arm without any pain-killers!

He didn't even tell anyone when he noticed that his urine was brown like coffee. Pookie thought it was weird, of course, but figured he must have drunk too many Cokes or something.

Then one day his mom noticed that he was swelling up. I mean his WHOLE BODY was swelling up like a balloon. She insisted that he go to the doctor--which he HATED! He took his bath and put on clean underwear, but she at least gave in and let him wear his safety-pin jacket.

The doctor looked him over, asked a few questions, and told his mom some stuff that he didn't understand. Before he knew it, they were back in the car heading home. "No, wait a minute! This is not the way home," he thought. "Maybe she's taking me to Burger King 'cause I was so brave," he reasoned. "Nope. There went Burger King. There went McDonald's. There went Pizza Hut."

"Where in the heck are we going, Mom?" He hoped his nervousness didn't show.

She explained in her calmest voice that Doctor Anderson thought he should go directly to Children's Hospital because . . . .

He didn't hear the rest of it. "Children's Hospital?" he thought. "A place for babies! Good grief! There must be some mistake!"

It took a while to be checked in, and a lot of people examined him and talked to his mom. He was very tired and believed that this had been the longest day of his life. He was in a hospital, wearing a stupid gown that had Bugs Bunny all over it. For crying out loud! He STILL didn't know what was going on. He wished that adults would talk English and that they didn't whisper to each other so much. SHEESH! It was HIS body that was swollen. He wondered if they were all waiting for it to split open and simply explode. He admitted to himself, but to no one else, that he was scared.

It was almost a relief when he was finally taken to his room. There were three other boys, and they were all about his age. Two didn't look or act sick at all. One looked like he was in a coma or something. The two healthy ones seemed really happy to have a new roommate. Pookie liked them immediately. "This might not be so bad," he thought.

He eventually found out that he had a disease called *nephritis* and that his kidneys were out of whack. He couldn't get out of bed at all--even to go to the bathroom. That part was the absolute worst! He personally felt that the doctors were being a little silly about the whole thing, and considered sneaking out of bed--but he didn't.

Pookie was in the hospital for weeks and weeks, and it began to feel like home to him. A really neat nurse taught him how to shuffle cards so that they flutter, you know, like a professional card player. He couldn't wait to show off in front of the guys back home. And he got a ton of gifts. A lady who looked like she worked for the hospital brought him a gigantic stuffed whale--FREE! He pretended that it was silly. After all, he was in the 6th grade and had a buzz haircut and an earring. But at night, when he missed his family the

most and when he felt the most scared, he sure did clutch that whale up close.

It was hard to leave his friends at the hospital even though he was happy to be going home. He would never forget his two "healthy" buddies or the one he never got to know because he died two days after Pookie was admitted. He would never forget the nurse who taught him how to shuffle cards. And he would never, ever part with his whale, no matter what the guys said or what anybody thought.

"I'm tough enough," he figured, "so that I don't have to be tough ALL the time."

Questions

1. What kind of person is Pookie?
2. What is meant by having an "image"?
3. What does it mean to be "tough"?
4. When Pookie was worried about the way he was feeling, who could he have talked to?
5. Think of another good title for this story.
6. If you could talk to Pookie, what question would you like to ask?
7. How do you think Pookie got sick?
* 8. Why do you think Pookie was so worried about being tough?
9. What might have happened if Pookie's mom had not noticed that he was swelling up?
* 10. If you were feeling tired and had back pains, would you tell someone? What would you do?

* Recommended for discussion

A Train Ride for Steven

Brian Largent
Clarksville Middle School

Steven was in his living room watching a television show about trains when he heard a knock on the door. He said to his mother, "I'll get it!" and ran to the front door.

"Hi, Steve!" exclaimed Trent. "Let's go down to the park and play some basketball. John is going to meet us by the train tracks, and we will leave from there."

"Great!" said Steven. "I'll let my mother know I'm leaving and will meet you at the tracks."

Steven ran to the living room, turned off the television set, and said, "I'm going to the park to play ball with Trent and John. See you later."

"All right, Steven, but don't be late for supper. We'll eat about 6:00," said Mother.

Steven ran out the front door, grabbed his ball on the way, and met his friends. "Let's just walk down the railroad tracks to the park. They run right by the park," he said.

"I don't know," said John. "There's a train due any minute, and we might get hurt."

At that moment, the boys heard a train whistle sounding in the distance. The boys instinctively backed up to give it plenty of room. In a matter of minutes, the train came rumbling down the track moving carefully through the city streets.

Steven said, "I'm going to the park on the train! Come on, guys! Let's hitch a ride!"

"That's not safe," said Trent. "We might fall off and really get hurt."

"I'm not going to try that either," said John.

Steven looked at his friends with disgust. Then he turned and looked at the train. He had always wanted to ride one, and this was his big chance. "If you're not going to ride, then take the ball, and I'll meet you there," he said.

As Steven leaped for the train, he reached for the handle, but his hand slipped, and he fell into the path of the train. He screamed with pain as one of his legs was crushed beneath the large metal wheels. His friends could do nothing but watch as he fell from the side of the train. Finally the last car passed by.

Trent turned to John and said, "I'm going to get his mother! You stay here, but don't try to move him!"

Trent ran all the way to Steven's house and ran in the door not bothering to knock. "Mrs. Mitchell! Mrs. Mitchell! Hurry, Steven has been hurt really bad! Call an ambulance!" he cried.

Mrs. Mitchell quickly called an ambulance and ran with Trent to the tracks. "What happened?" she cried.

"Steven said he was going to ride the train down to the park. We told him it wasn't safe, Mrs. Mitchell. Honest!" said John.

The ambulance arrived and took Steven to the hospital. The doctor worked for hours trying to save Steven's right leg so he could use it again, but there was just too much damage. They decided to amputate it just above the knee and give him an artificial leg.

The doctor came out and spoke to Steven's mother. "Mrs. Mitchell," he began, "we tried to save the leg, but it was too badly damaged. He will need an artificial leg called a prosthesis. He will have a limp because of the differences in the legs, but he will be able to walk.

Mrs. Mitchell sighed. Steven's train ride was an expensive one but not nearly as expensive as it could have been!

Questions

1. What is meant by the word "prosthesis"?

2. What is meant by the word "amputate"?

3. What do you know about the speed of trains as they go through cities? Through the country?

* 4. What is meant by "Steven's train ride was expensive"?

* 5. What should John have done to help Steven after he was hurt?

* 6. Why do you think Steven really wanted to ride the train?

* 7. What could have happened if John had tried to move Steven after the accident?

* 8. How could Steven's friends have stopped him from trying to ride the train?

* 9. How would you feel if your friend was badly hurt doing something he shouldn't?

*10. Should Steven's mother punish him for trying to ride the train? Why or why not?

* Recommended for discussion

A "Perfect" Imperfect Boy

Marla Adams
North Harrison High School

In March, 1975, a baby boy was born. His parents were so happy to have a son, but this little boy was born with birth defects. He had a cleft palate and two clefts of his upper lip. This means that he had no roof to his mouth. Where his upper lip should have been, he had two big holes that went up into his nostrils.

The little boy was transferred from the hospital in which he was born to Norton Children's Hospital, where he stayed until he was thirteen days old. He had his first operation when he was six days old. It closed one of the holes in his lip. Since then, this boy, Scott, has had five more operations. One closed the second hole in his lip. Another operation gave him a roof to his mouth which made it easier for him to eat. Two more operations became necessary as Scott grew, and they made minor repairs to his mouth and lip.

The last operation was the worst. Last summer Scott checked into the new Kosair Children's Hospital. A team of surgeons took bone tissue from Scott's right pelvic bone and grafted it onto what little bone Scott had in his upper gums. His teeth were not growing correctly because there wasn't enough bone for the teeth to anchor themselves to. The bone graft was successful, and today Scott has several new teeth.

After this operation, Scott no longer had to wear a metal appliance in his mouth to keep his upper gums from collapsing inward. He had worn it since he was five years old, and now he was thirteen. After the final visit to one of the surgeons, Scott said, "I never knew how it felt to have so much room in my mouth."

Even though this boy was not born perfect, he has never had any trouble getting along in the world. From a happy, active little boy, Scott has grown into a fine, intelligent, athletic teenager. Even though his face isn't perfect, he has lots of friends. His friends like him because he treats them well and has a great sense of humor. He is a wonderful person to be with. Even his older sister likes him and is proud of him.

Just because someone looks different from you, remember to always accept them as they are. Wheelchairs, glasses, hearing aids, crutches, braces, scars, or a missing arm or leg only mean that there is something physically wrong with the person. That person has thoughts, feelings, desires, likes, and dislikes just as you do. Remember that no one is perfect. It's just that some people's imperfections are visible while other people's defects are not.

Questions

1. How would you feel if you were handicapped in some way?

* 2. How do you think your family would feel if it included a child with birth defects?

3. All people have some handicap. What is yours? How do you deal with it?

* 4. How do you treat people whose defects are visible?

5. What happens when teeth have nothing to grow through?

* 6. What other types of problems might Scott have had because of his birth defects?

7. Because bone was taken from his pelvis, what kinds of problems might Scott have had after his last operation?

8. What other kinds of birth defects do you know about?

* 9. What could have happened to Scott if he had not had his operations?

* 10. Why do you think Scott's sister likes him and is proud of him?

*Recommended for discussion

Randy's Big Chance

Denny Rice
Lexington, Kentucky

Randy awoke to the urging of his mother to get up for school. He wanted to get ready, but he could not seem to gather the strength to get up. At last, only because of the tone of his father's voice rather than strength, he was able to get out of bed.

Randy was feeling happy even though things had not been going well for him lately. The doctor had recently increased his medication for his epileptic seizures, and his grades had been dropping. It seemed his parents were a little more irritable toward him than normal. His teachers were scolding him, it seemed, for his behavior in class.

Even with all these things, what really mattered to Randy was basketball. Ever since he got a basketball for his fifth birthday, that was the only sport he cared for. He remembered watching his star, Jay Burson, play basketball. Randy was small like Jay, but he patterned his game on hustle and determination.

When tryouts for basketball were announced at his school, he eagerly awaited the chance to show the coach his ability. When the final cut was made, Randy's name appeared on the list of those who made the team. Randy was just happy to be on the team. Even though he did not start, he hustled like never before. He was sure that, if he were patient, his big chance would surely come.

Today was his big chance. The coach had told him that he would start in tonight's game. He quickly dressed for school, and even though he normally ate a big breakfast, he was too nervous and excited to eat. He knew he should have eaten after he took his medication, but he didn't think this one time would matter. As he got ready to leave for school, he instinctively reached for his medication on the kitchen table. What he did not notice was that he had picked up the wrong bottle.

The bus ride to school was a short one, but to him it seemed longer than usual. As the morning dragged on, his head began to hurt.

By lunchtime it hurt enough for him to think about going to the office for aspirin, but he decided to rough it out. After all, it was going to be his special day. The heaviness in his stomach and the headache would surely go away when he ate lunch.

As he ate lunch, it became an effort to eat, and midway through he could eat no more. This time, he remembered to take his medication after he ate. He decided to take 2 tablets because he was feeling bad and he had missed his medication in the morning.

He turned his thoughts to the game after school in the hope that it would make the pain go away. How long was it now to game time?

The afternoon was a blur, and he found it increasingly hard to concentrate. Nothing seemed to register with him. Do you always feel this way before a big game he thought?

The school day was almost over. Five minutes to go, and he would run from the gym to his locker to get his uniform. What was the teacher saying? Why was she whispering? Randy finally heard the faint sound of the school bell. At last, he thought. He quickly opened the double doors and moved swiftly toward his locker. Why didn't the dizziness go away? His head began to sweat. He felt so tired. If only he could lie down.

As he rounded the corner, he realized he was in trouble. He tried to move, but his feet would not support him. He fell, but the floor wasn't as hard as he knew it to be. He tried to yell for help, but it was useless.

Finally, after what seemed an eternity, a crowd began to gather about him. He was never so embarrassed in his life. He was about to become a star and now this! Surely, this was all a dream.

Randy remembered seeing his coach and several men who were carrying things he had never seen before. What were they going to do? He tried not to be scared, but he was getting more afraid every second. He wanted to cry, but what would everybody think of him? If only his mom and dad were here, they would make everything right. The last thing he remembered was somebody squeezing his hand and twirling his curls. He heard a noise like that of an ambulance.

When he awoke, his wishes had come true. Mom and Dad were there. They were talking to him softly. He was going to be all right. He had given all of them a scare. The next time he took his medication, he would follow directions.

Randy missed the game that night, but he realized how happy and lucky he was to have a second chance. He was going to make the most of his second chance. Mom and Dad were happy, too.

Questions

1. What would it be like to be dependent on prescribed medication?

2. Once Randy knew that he felt worse than usual, where could he have gone for help?

* 3. What might have been the outcome to this problem if Mom and Dad had not been as supportive?

4. Why did Randy's problems occur?

5. What would you have done if you were one of the students who found Randy on the floor?

* 6. Was Randy right or wrong in not seeking help from people other than his parents? Why?

7. What might have happened if somebody had not quickly responded and called an ambulance?

8. What other problems or consequences could have resulted from Randy's actions?

* 9. What actions could Randy's parents take to make sure this situation did not develop again?

* 10. What do you know about Randy's personality that contributed to his problems?

*Recommended for discussion

Real Men Don't Whine

M. E. Miller
North Harrison Elementary

"Mary Elizabeth, you may have to put some iodine on my head after a while," Jerol mentioned as he watched the ball game on the television.

"Why? What's wrong with your head?" Mary Elizabeth's interest was aroused.

"I bumped it this afternoon at work."

"Let me see," she said as she began to root around in his hair. "Oh! My goodness! You need more than just a little iodine. You need some stitches in there. You head is split open."

"It's not that bad." Jerol always pretended that his injuries were nothing. He never wanted to go to the doctor. "Besides," he continued, "it's already 9:15. The doctor's office is closed. The emergency room will be full and busy. It will take too long. Everyone will think I'm a sissy because you can't even see the cut."

"That's silly," Mary Elizabeth encouraged. "The cut is in your hair. That's a really dirty area. When you wash your hair, the cut will pop back open. Everytime you comb your hair, it will hurt. There will be lots of germs. The cut might become infected. It needs stitches so that it can heal faster. No one will think you're a sissy. You can tell them that I made you come to the emergency room!"

Fifteen minutes later, Jerol and Mary Elizabeth were at the hospital emergency room. Jerol had to answer several questions while the hospital worker typed the answers into her computer. He had to tell her his full name, where he lived, and his phone number. Then she asked questions about insurance and his medical history. Finally, Jerol was ready to go into the emergency room.

It was an exciting place. Nurses and doctors were very busy. A mom and dad were there with their little girl. A policeman was speaking on the telephone. A woman, who was going to have a baby, was talking to a nurse. A teenager was lying on a bed. He had a cast

on his arm. Many people were there to see the doctor. Their families were sitting or standing around waiting.

Since Jerol wasn't badly injured, a nurse told him to sit on a chair and roll up his sleeve. After writing down his temperature and blood pressure, the nurse took him to an examining room. Mary Elizabeth went along.

"What's wrong with you?" Nurse Davis seemed surprised to see such a healthy looking man. "You don't look so bad."

"I cut my head," Jerol began to explain. "I was delivering some food to a restaurant, and as I bent over to put the food on the floor of the cooler, I hit my head on a metal bar."

"Did it knock you out?" she questioned.

"Not totally. My knees buckled, and I just sorta fell backward, sitting in a tub of hamburger! I was really woozy, and even though it was in plastic bags, I remember the cold, squishy feeling of sitting in that tub of raw hamburger.

"Let me take a look. Lie down." Nurse Davis began to gently part Jerol's hair looking for the injury. At first she didn't see it, and Jerol was afraid that she was going to scold him for wasting the doctor's time. But then she saw it. "Well, I guess you did bump your head! That's a pretty deep cut. You certainly do need stitches. I'll have to scrub it first so that it won't get infected."

Nurse Davis readied a tray for the doctor. She used tongs to place several hot sterile towels on the tray. Then she collected the instruments and supplies needed to sew up Jerol's head. Mary Elizabeth was really interested, and the nurse let her stand right beside Jerol's head to see everything that was going on.

First, the nurse shaved a little space all around the cut so that the hair wouldn't be in the way. Jerol worried that it would look bad until the hair grew back. Then she poured some special brown soap onto some gauze and began to scrub Jerol's head. And I mean scrub! She really washed that cut. It sorta hurt Jerol. He squinched his eyes shut, but he didn't say anything. After she scrubbed the cut, she squirted off the soap with a bottle of saline solution. Then all was ready for the doctor.

Doctor Adams was nice. He asked more questions about how Jerol had cut his head.

"I hit him in the head with a ball bat," Mary Elizabeth joked.

"Well," the doctor laughed, "I'll have to start sewing."

"Can I watch?" asked Mary Elizabeth. "I'm really interested in this stuff."

"Sure. If you can take it," the doctor replied. "Some watchers faint when they see the actual stitches! Sometimes we catch them before they hit the floor; sometimes we don't!"

After washing his hands, Dr. Adams put on rubber gloves. Then he prepared Jerol by covering his head with a sterile cloth. There was a hole in the cloth, and the cut showed through the hole. Dr. Adams said that this was called a sterile field, and that Mary Elizabeth could watch but not touch anything.

"This will sting a little," Dr. Adams said as he gave Jerol a shot right in the cut! The shot would keep Jerol from feeling the needle as the doctor sewed.

"That didn't hurt as much as when the nurse scrubbed the cut awhile ago!" Jerol laughed. He said that he really didn't feel much at all.

The sewing needle was about one inch long and looked like half of a circle. It was curved so that the doctor could sew more easily. He didn't use his fingers at all! He held the needle with forceps. They looked like scissors, but were more like a pair of pliers.

Dr. Adams took six little stitches. He tied each one. They were not connected. It took about ten minutes. Jerol said that he couldn't feel a thing. Mary Elizabeth stood right beside the doctor and could see every movement he made. It was neat! She could see the needle going in one side of the cut and coming out the other. The doctor's hands were very steady. His fingers were nimble. Tying the knot for each stitch was tricky. The stitches are called sutures. After the last suture, Dr. Adams put some ointment on the cut. The medicine was to fight infection.

"Thanks a lot, Doctor," Jerol said as he sat up.

"You're welcome, " Dr. Adams answered. "Before you leave, the nurse will tell you how to take care of the stitches. Try not to sit in any more hamburger." The doctor chuckled at his own joke as he walked to his next patient.

Nurse Davis gave Jerol some papers to sign. She explained how to take care of his stitches and gave him some ointment.

"Remember, in one week you should go to your family doctor to have the stitches removed," she finished.

Jerol and Mary Elizabeth were back home by 10:30 p.m. The whole trip had only taken a little over an hour!

Questions

1. Why didn't Jerol want to go to the emergency room?

* 2. Is it all right for adults to be afraid of doctors? Why might they be afraid?

3. How many different kinds of jobs went on in the emergency room?

4. Would you rather watch someone get sewn up or do the sewing?

5. How do you think the nurse felt when she knew that she was hurting Jerol?

6. *Compassionate* is a word that means showing a kindly feeling toward other's pain. Was anyone compassionate in this story? Who? How?

7. Do you know anyone who tries to joke and be brave when he or she is hurt? Describe the person.

8. What might have happened if Jerol hadn't gone for medical help?

* 9. Have you ever been hurt and not told someone?

* 10. Would you be afraid to go to an emergency room if you were hurt? What would frighten you most?

*Recommended for discussion

Ricky's Hospital Experience

Young Ricky Eaton was having the greatest time of his life. It was half-time of the first game of the season, and the score was twelve to six with his team, the Bluejays, in the lead. Coach Brown had just congratulated him for scoring the last touchdown of the half and was now talking to some of the other players.

Ricky could hear his loud, booming voice in the distance, but he wasn't listening to the words. Instead, he was thinking about how he had moved here from Newport four months ago. It had been tough finding new friends and managing to fit in, but he had been accepted by most of the kids in his class, and he gradually became friends with them. Then football season started, and Ricky went out for the team. The coach loved his playing ability, and his popularity began to grow as he proved his abilities in scrimmage games. Ricky was still dreaming of his new-found fame and feeling very proud of himself when the buzzer sounded signaling time for the second half to begin.

On the third play of the second half, Ricky broke away from the defense and ran wide to the left. Brian, the quarterback, threw him a perfect pass, and it looked as though he was going to score another touchdown. Then, as he neared the 20 yard line, he was tackled from behind. Both players went down hard, and Ricky felt a sharp stab of pain in his right leg.

Both benches emptied as the players and coaches scrambled onto the field. Ricky dimly heard Coach Brown yelling for him to lie still instead of trying to get up. At first the pain was almost unbearable, and Ricky only caught bits and pieces of the conversation going on around him. However, he did hear the coach say that his leg may be broken and that an ambulance was on the way.

After a short time, Ricky saw the ambulance come rolling onto the field with sirens screaming and red lights flashing. Two men dressed in blue uniforms got out of the ambulance and rushed toward him. One of the men began asking Ricky where he hurt, and the other man brought out a stretcher and a big metal box that Ricky thought looked an awful lot like his father's tool box. Then the ambulance

men took an inflatable plastic splint from the metal box and placed it on Ricky's leg and proceeded to strap him onto the stretcher. They explained to Ricky that these precautions were necessary to keep his leg from bouncing around during his trip to the hospital and causing him more pain.

The ambulance took Ricky straight to the emergency room of the hospital, and the men rolled his stretcher through the automatic doors and into the emergency room. Two nurses dressed in white uniforms took his stretcher and rolled him down a long narrow hall and into a small room where Dr. Henderson was waiting for him. The doctor took the plastic splint from Ricky's leg and examined the leg carefully. He said that he didn't think the leg was broken, but the leg would have to be x-rayed to be sure. Then Dr. Henderson gave Ricky a shot for the pain and sent the two nurses to take Ricky down to the x-ray lab.

As the nurses wheeled Ricky down the long hallway toward the lab, Ricky noticed the coke machines, elevators, and waiting rooms. He saw nurses going into and out of various rooms. They were carrying medicine or pushing wheel chairs, and he noticed that every room had adjustable beds and televisions.

The x-ray technician placed Ricky on a table and explained to him that he was going to take several pictures of his leg. These pictures were called x-rays. The doctor could then look at these pictures and determine whether Ricky's leg was broken or not.

As it turned out, Ricky's leg was not broken at all. However, it was sprained badly, and Ricky had to spend the night in the hospital for observation. He was given a room with one of those adjustable beds and a remote control television set. The nurses came in regularly and bandaged his leg on an ice pack to keep the swelling down. Early the next morning a nurse brought in a big pot of flowers that his classmates had sent him. Then, the doctor came in and told Ricky that he could go home now, but he would have to miss football practice for a couple of weeks until his leg healed.

"Boy," Ricky thought, "I can't wait to get back to school and tell my friends about my experience at the hospital."

Questions

1. What emergency equipment was used on Ricky's leg before the trip to the hospital?

2. During what part of the game did Ricky have the accident?

3. Why do you think that Ricky felt so happy at the beginning of the story?

4. At the end of the story, how did Ricky feel about his experience at the hospital?

5. What was the first thing the doctor said after examining Ricky's leg?

6. What did the doctor suggest next?

7. How might this injury affect Ricky's family?

8. Why did Ricky have to spend the night in the hospital?

* 9. From your reading of the story, how do you think a bad sprain should be treated?

* 10. What evidence did the doctor use to determine that Ricky's leg was definitely not broken?

*Recommended for discussion

No More 4-Wheeling

Lyn C. Stidham
Powell High School

My friend Joe and I went 4-wheeling with Joe's dad. It was a big deal in my hometown to spend Sunday afternoons trying to get these big trucks through and over places you wouldn't think they could go. We were going to try to pull a local ridge called Pompie in Joe's dad's truck. Joe's dad, Mr. Shannon, had a beautiful truck, just recently painted, with big, oversized tires that set the truck much higher off the ground than a normal sized pickup. It was something to look at with the large chrome foglights and roll-over protection bar just over the cab of the 4-wheeler. This truck was not just something to see and admire; it was made to travel some very rough places.

On this Sunday we had been going through woods and mud holes, up hills, and between trees. It was great. We had already gotten to the top of Pompie when Mr. Shannon just stopped and let the truck roll all the way back down the hill, about 50 feet. When we got to the bottom, we were laughing so hard we were almost crying. Joe and I started shouting for Mr. Shannon to do it all again. He put the truck in gear and started to go back up the hill. About half way up the muddy hill, the truck started turning sideways because the incline of the hill was so steep. We sat there for a few seconds hoping the truck would pull the hill when suddenly we were flipping over. The truck flipped to the left and then bounced on the left side as it came down to the bottom of the hill. When it finally stopped, we were stacked up on Joe's Dad. We had bumped our heads several times. Joe had bitten his tongue because he got so excited. Joe and I were all right, but we noticed Mr. Shannon making a face like he was in pain, and blood was running down the side of his face. The truck was on its left side!

Joe and I finally got our door open, but we didn't know how to help Mr. Shannon get out. As we were trying to figure it out, a lady yelled to us from the other side of the ridge. She said she had called

an ambulance, and it was on the way. All we could do was wait. There was no way Joe and I could get Mr. Shannon out of the truck because he was so much bigger than we were.

Mr. Shannon was able to talk and told us he would be all right, but we could tell by the look on his face that he was hurt. Joe and I were really scared.

It seemed like a long time, but the ambulance got there in about fifteen minutes. We were way out in the country. The ambulance driver and his assistant got Mr. Shannon out of the truck. He was leaning over and could hardly breathe. We got into the ambulance and went to the local, rural hospital. It was a small hospital, but it was the closest to us.

The doctors examined Mr. Shannon and put him in an area of the hospital called intensive care. It was the part of the hospital for people that were seriously ill. The doctors said that when the truck flipped over, Mr. Shannon fell into the steering wheel so hard that it bruised his heart. When Mrs. Shannon came, she explained all this to Joe and me.

Mr. Shannon stayed in the hospital the rest of the day. He kept hurting more and more all the time. Mrs. Shannon was very worried and wasn't completely satisfied with what the doctors were telling her. She waited a couple more hours then decided she wanted him moved to another hospital. She wanted him sent to the University Hospital where doctors had more advanced technology and equipment. The doctors agreed because they too were puzzled with Mr. Shannon's pain increase and breathing difficulty.

When Mr. Shannon got to the University Hospital, he was examined again, just as he had been when he first wrecked, but these doctors used more machines and equipment. After their examinations they came and talked to Mrs. Shannon. They told her that Mr. Shannon's heart was not bruised. She was relieved, but knew that something else must be wrong. The doctors explained to her that Mr. Shannon had hit the steering wheel so hard and so fast that it had damaged his lungs not his heart. Mr. Shannon fell into the steering wheel as the truck flipped over. It had pushed all the air out of one of his lungs. That was the reason he was having trouble breathing. The doctors said he would be better in a couple of days. They put a tube into the lung through his windpipe and pumped air back into his lungs. Mr. Shannon was sore for several days, but he was all right.

When Joe and I went to visit, Mr. Shannon said we would not be 4-wheeling again for a long time since his truck was destroyed. He also said that the next truck would have body-strapping seat belts.

Questions

1. What did the truck look like?
2. What is meant by 4-Wheeling?
3. Why do you think 4-Wheeling is a hobby for the people in this story?
4. What caused the truck to flip over?
5. What might have kept Mr. Shannon from being hurt so badly?
* 6. What might the boys have done if the lady hadn't come to help?
* 7. How would you feel if you were in the truck as it flipped over?
* 8. What would you do if your father were in the truck and you couldn't get him out?
* 9. Why couldn't the small hospital help Mr. Shannon?
* 10. How do you feel about 4-Wheeling as a hobby?

* Recommended for discussion

Mary's Friend

E. Elaine Cantrell
Eastern Kentucky University

My name is Mary. I have a friend named Jerry who is the bravest person I know. Jerry is the smartest student in our science class. There are times when I think Jerry knows more than our science teacher. Ms. Kopaz is afraid of insects and mice. Jerry likes to catch insects on the playground during our lunch break. Sometimes he brings his catch into our science class to identify them by using the insect identification guide book. Ms. Kopaz always moves very quickly away from Jerry if he has caught another live insect.

Jerry and I have been friends for three years. We first became friends when our third grade class visited the city zoo.

I miss Jerry when he doesn't come to school. During the second week of December, both Jerry and I were sick with the flu. I returned to school after Christmas vacation, but Jerry didn't return until the 5th day of January. He had been in the hospital during Christmas vacation. During Jerry's stay in the hospital, his doctor found that he was diabetic.

For several weeks Jerry's mother came to school every day during our lunch break to do some sort of blood glucose test on Jerry. Sometimes Jerry would get sick at school, and his mother would come and take him home with her.

Some of the students in our class began to tease Jerry because his mother came to school. One day when Jerry was sick and left school early, our homeroom teacher, Mr. Nelson, explained some of the facts about diabetes to us. Mr. Nelson explained that because Jerry was a diabetic his body could not produce enough insulin.

"Why do our bodies need insulin?" asked Rex, the quarterback for our football team. Mr. Nelson explained that insulin is necessary to keep the glucose regulated in our blood.

"Why does it have to be regulated?" asked Rex. Mr. Nelson explained that when the blood glucose is elevated beyond the normal range, a diabetic coma could result. He also explained that the glucose level could drop below the normal range causing the body to go into insulin shock. Mr. Nelson explained that because Jerry's body does not produce enough insulin, he must receive an injection of insulin everyday. Because Jerry must have the same amount of insulin in his body every day, he must eat similar types of foods every day. He would become sick if he skipped a meal or ate a lot of junk food.

Beginning in March, Jerry's mother no longer came to school every day to check Jerry's blood glucose. Jerry came to school with an instrument much like a staple gun. He placed a finger inside the instrument, pressed down and slightly pricked his finger. Jerry placed a small drop of blood on a chemical strip; he then matched his results with the ranges on the chemical strip bottle.

I think Jerry was very brave because he checked his blood glucose everyday at school. If Jerry's glucose range was above the normal range, he had to get some physical exercise such as running in the gym. If his glucose range was below normal, he had to drink a glass of juice. If Jerry's glucose range was out of the normal range, he had to recheck his blood glucose after he exercised or drank his juice.

I'm proud to be Jerry's best friend. I will be especially proud of him when he graduates from medical school and becomes a doctor. It will be difficult for him, but I know he can do it! Who knows? Maybe Jerry will discover a cure for diabetes.

Questions

1. What grade was Mary in when she first met Jerry?
2. What is the medical term for Jerry's condition?
3. Why did Mary think Jerry was the bravest boy she knew?
* 4. Why is it important for a diabetic to check his or her blood glucose often?
5. Why did Jerry's mother come to school everyday?
6. What character did you like least in the story? Why?
* 7. Why don't older students want their mothers to come to school?
8. Would you like to have Ms. Kopaz for a science teacher? Why?
* 9. Explain why you think Jerry was or was not brave?
10. How do you think Jerry and Mary would feel about a cure for diabetes?

*Recommended for discussion